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BOOK REVIEWS

THE PEACE CONFERENCE AT THE HAGUE. Its bearings on International Law and Policy. By F. W. Holls, D. C. L. New York: The Macmillan Co. 1900. pp. xxiv, 572.

In writing this account of the Peace Conference, at The Hague, Mr. Holls has endeavored to meet the demands of two classes of people, viz., the specialist in International Law and the general reader. The needs of these two, it need hardly be said, are in some respects divergent, if not actually antagonistic, the former desiring a fullness of detail not sought by the latter. The result, therefore, of an attempt to meet the requirements of both in one work must inevitably partake somewhat of the nature of a compromise. It may be said without hesitation that Mr. Holls has been eminently successful in reconciling the conflicting demands thus made upon him, with the result of producing a work which should find a place in the library of every student of international relations, whether specialist in International Law or not. Apparently the author was led to undertake the work, not merely because of the need for an accurate account of the Conference within the limits of a single volume of moderate size, but also in the hope of correcting the misunderstanding which still exists among the general public, both as to the purposes for which the Conference was called and as what it actually accomplished. As he points out, the title of "Disarmament Conference" generally applied in public print was based on a misinterpretation of the proposals of the Russian government, which, so far as they dealt with this subject at all, aimed at the most at putting an end to "the progressive increase of military and naval armaments," and not at all at any general disarmament. In view of this misapprehension of the objects of the Conference, the fact that it was found that the subject of disarmament could not even be discussed at the Conference, has undoubtedly left on the public mind an impression that the Conference was a failure. Whether or not we can agree with Mr. Holls in the high estimate which he makes of the value of the results attained, the Conference certainly was not in any sense a failure, but accomplished much which will undoubtedly be of lasting benefit to the civilized world.

The larger part of the volume is, of course, devoted to an account of the Conference. It gives accurately and without unnecessary detail the facts concerning the calling, opening and organization of the Conference, together with a full list of the members. Mr. Holls has wisely refrained from attempting any extended comment upon the provisions of the treaties agreed upon, confining himself to such remarks as seem necessary to elucidate the text or to show the motives which led to the adoption of any project. The

discussions of the various proposals in the committees, before they were laid before the Conference as a whole, are given with a fullness sufficient to indicate the reasons which led the delegates to adopt one plan or reject another. The same may be said of the report of the proceedings in the Conference itself. As the book has been written primarily for American and English readers, particular attention is properly paid to the action of the American and British representatives.

Probably the chapter which will most provoke discussion is the one in which Mr. Holls attempts to indicate the bearings of the Conference upon International Law and Policy. It is to be feared that most students of international affairs will not share the enthusiasm which leads the author to apply to the treaty of The Hague for the Pacific Adjustment of International Differences the title of "Magna Charta of International Law." Nevertheless, the chapter is not the least interesting in the book, and the question is one the decision of which must be left to the future.

The last two hundred pages of the volume are devoted to three appendices. The first of these contains the full text of the final act, treaties and declarations adopted by the Conference, the French text being printed on the left hand, and an English translation on the right-hand pages; the second gives the general report of the Commission of the United States made to the Secretary of State; and the third, an account of the Grotius celebration held at Delft July 4, 1898. The value of the book as a work of reference for the student of International Law would be enhanced were the index made somewhat more full. It is impossible, for example, to find by means of it what powers have ratified the different treaties. This, however, is but a slight blemish on a work which it is to be hoped will have a wide circulation and thus be the means of producing on the part of the world at large a more just estimate of the achievements of the Hague Conference.

THE LAW OF TORTS.—By Melville Madison Bigelow, Ph. D. Seventh Edition. Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1901. pp. xxxi, 438.

This is an admirable book in every respect. In appearance, as well as in substance, the present edition is superior to either of the six editions which have preceded it. For this marked improvement both the publishers and the author are entitled to credit.

In the preface, Mr. Bigelow frankly admits that none of the earlier editions covered the whole field of tort; and he refers the reader, who cares to see the starting point of this work, to the preface of his leading cases on torts, published in 1875. A comparison of the two books is interesting and instructive. It shows not only that the author's conception of his subject has been enlarged and systematized during this quarter of a century, but also that the subject has received careful and scientific treatment by writers and judges. In his earliest book Mr. Bigelow dealt with various kinds of torts, and stated the rules appertaining to them with